

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A data nullification device for nullifying at least a part of target data recorded on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data nullification device comprising:

a judging unit operable to judge, for each data block of the target data, whether the data block needs to be nullified;

~~a receiving unit operable to receive continuously transmitted data from an external device, and set received data as a new data block; and~~

~~a sequential nullifying unit operable to, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, write the new data block to a recording area that currently stores at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block to destroy only a part of a data block judged as needing to be nullified, the part including data necessary to utilize remaining parts of the data block;~~

~~a processing capacity judging unit operable to judge whether the data nullification device has a processing capacity sufficient to destroy all data which is judged as needing to be nullified;~~
and

~~a total nullifying unit operable to destroy data which is included in the data block judged as needing to be nullified and is not destroyed by the sequential nullifying unit, only when the~~

processing capacity judging unit judges that the data nullification device has the sufficient processing capacity.

2. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in
which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and
wherein said judging unit judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the
sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein each data block has a length corresponding to a fixed transmission time period,
and
wherein a specified number of recording areas which are each used as a recording area of
a data block are reserved on the recording medium.

5-6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 2, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in
units of data blocks,

wherein said judging unit further judges that each data block which was utilized by said utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

8. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 7,

wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and recorded on the recording medium,

wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,

wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks, and

wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which was reproduced by said utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

9. (Currently Amended) The data nullification device of Claim 1,

wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,

wherein said judging unit judges that each data block whose recording time limit is reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information ~~information~~, and

~~wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording~~

~~time limit of the data block is reached, said nullifying unit nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.~~

10. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 9, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,
wherein said judging unit further judges that each data block which was utilized by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

11. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 10,
wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and recorded on the recording medium,
wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks, and
wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which was reproduced by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

12. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 1, further comprising:
a utilizing unit operable to utilize the target data recorded on the recording medium, in
units of data blocks,
wherein said judging unit judges that each data block which was utilized by the utilizing
unit needs to be nullified.

13. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 12,
wherein the target data is content data which is transmitted from an external device and
recorded on the recording medium,
wherein the content data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether
copying of the content data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit reproduces the content data recorded on the recording medium,
in units of data blocks, and
wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the content data shows that
the copying of the content data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block which
was reproduced by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

14. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 12,
wherein the target data is accompanied with copy control information showing whether
copying of the target data is permitted or prohibited,
wherein said utilizing unit records the target data recorded on the recording medium, to
another recording medium, in units of data blocks, and

wherein, only if the copy control information accompanying the target data shows that the copying of the target data is prohibited, said judging unit judges that each data block on the recording medium which was recorded by the utilizing unit needs to be nullified.

15-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) The data nullification device of Claim ~~16~~ 1,
wherein the target data is MPEG data including I pictures, and
wherein the part of the data block necessary to utilize the remaining parts of the data block is an I picture.

18. (Currently Amended) The data nullification device of Claim ~~16~~ 1,
wherein the target data is MPEG data including I pictures, and
wherein the part of the data block necessary to utilize the remaining parts of the data block is a first sector of an I picture.

19-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) The data nullification device of Claim 1,
wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an individual encryption key,

wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the recording medium, and

wherein said sequential nullifying unit destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified.

23. (Original) The data nullification device of Claim 22, further comprising:

an acquiring unit operable to acquire the target data in an encoded form;

a decoding unit operable to decode the encoded target data using a user key which has been provided to authorized users in advance, to obtain the target data;

a key generating unit operable to generate an arbitrary encryption key and a decryption key corresponding to the encryption key, for each data block of the target data;

a data encrypting unit operable to encrypt the data block using the encryption key so that the encrypted data block can be decrypted using the corresponding decryption key;

a key encrypting unit operable to encrypt the decryption key using an identifier unique to the data nullification device; and

a recording unit operable to record the encrypted data block and the encrypted decryption key onto the recording medium.

24. (Previously Presented) The data nullification device of Claim 23,

wherein at least said decoding unit, said key generating unit, said data encrypting unit, and said key encrypting unit are contained in a single semiconductor chip.

25. (Currently Amended) A data nullification program embodied on a computer readable medium for nullifying at least a part of target data recorded on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data nullification program causing a computer to execute a method comprising:

a first judging step of judging, for each data block of the target data, whether the data block needs to be nullified;

~~receiving continuously transmitted data from an external device, and setting the received data as a new data block; and~~

~~writing, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, the new data block to a recording area that currently stores at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block~~

a sequential nullifying step of destroying only a part of a data block judged as needing to be nullified, the part including data necessary to utilize remaining parts of the data block;

a second judging step of judging whether a sufficient processing capacity exists to destroy all data which is judged as needing to be nullified; and

a total nullifying step of destroying data which is included in the data block judged as needing to be nullified and is not destroyed in said sequential nullifying step, only when said second judging step judges that there is sufficient processing capacity to destroy all data which is judged as needing to be nullified.

26. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in
which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and
wherein the first judging step judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the
sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 26, wherein the
method executed by the computer further comprises:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of
data blocks,

wherein the first judging step further judges that each data block which was utilized in the
utilizing step needs to be nullified.

29. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,
wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time
limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time
limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,
wherein the first judging step judges that each data block whose recording time limit is
reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information ~~information, and~~
~~wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording~~

~~time limit of the data block is reached, the nullifying nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.~~

30. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 29, wherein the method executed by the computer further comprises:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the first judging step further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing step needs to be nullified.

31. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25, wherein the method executed by the computer further comprises:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the first judging step judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing needs to be nullified.

32-33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) The data nullification program of Claim 25,

wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an individual encryption key,

wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the recording medium, and

wherein the sequential nullifying step destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified.

35. (Currently Amended) A data nullification method for nullifying at least a part of target data recorded on a recording medium, the target data being made up of a plurality of data blocks, the data nullification method comprising:

a first judging step of judging, for each data block of the target data, whether the data block needs to be nullified;

~~receiving continuously transmitted data from an external device, and setting the received data as a new data block, and~~

~~writing, when a predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or when one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches a predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified, the new data block to a recording area that currently stores at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified, to thereby nullify at least a part of the at least one of the data blocks which is judged as needing to be nullified and at the same time record the new data block~~

a sequential nullifying step of destroying only a part of a data block judged as needing to be nullified, the part including data necessary to utilize remaining parts of the data block;

a second judging step of judging whether a sufficient processing capacity exists to destroy all data which is judged as needing to be nullified; and

a total nullifying step of destroying data which is included in the data block judged as needing to be nullified and is not destroyed in said sequential nullifying step, only when said second judging step judges that there is sufficient processing capacity to destroy all data which is judged as needing to be nullified.

36. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,
wherein the recording medium stores sequence information that shows a sequence in which the plurality of data blocks were recorded onto the recording medium, and
wherein the first judging step judges, in succession, the plurality of data blocks in the sequence shown by the sequence information, as needing to be nullified.

37. (Canceled)

38. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 36, further comprising:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the first judging step further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing step needs to be nullified.

39. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,

wherein the recording medium stores time limit information showing a recording time limit of each data block recorded on the recording medium, the recording time limit being a time limit after which retention of the data block on the recording medium is prohibited,

wherein the first judging step judges that each data block whose recording time limit is reached needs to be nullified, based on the time limit information ~~information~~, and

~~wherein, whenever any data block is judged as needing to be nullified because a recording time limit of the data block is reached, the nullifying nullifies the data block irrespective of whether the predetermined number of data blocks are judged as needing to be nullified or whether one or more data blocks whose total amount of data reaches the predetermined amount are judged as needing to be nullified.~~

40. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 39, further comprising:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the first judging step further judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing step needs to be nullified.

41. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35, further comprising:

a utilizing step of utilizing the target data recorded on the recording medium, in units of data blocks,

wherein the first judging step judges that each data block which was utilized in the utilizing needs to be nullified.

42-43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) The data nullification method of Claim 35,

wherein each data block recorded on the recording medium has been encrypted using an individual encryption key,

wherein a decryption key for decrypting the encrypted data block is stored on the recording medium, and

wherein the sequential nullifying step destroys at least a decryption key corresponding to a data block which is judged as needing to be nullified.

45. (New) The data nullification device of Claim 1,

wherein the target data is data relating to digital content,

wherein the data nullification device further comprises a reproducing unit operable to reproduce the digital content based on the data relating to the digital content, and

wherein the processing capacity judging unit judges that the data nullification device has the sufficient processing capacity when the processing capacity is sufficient to operate both of the reproducing unit and the total nullifying unit without limiting a function of the reproducing unit,

and judges that the data nullification device does not have the sufficient processing capacity when the processing capacity is not sufficient to operate both of the reproducing unit and the total nullifying unit without limiting the function of the reproducing unit.